

**City of Chula Vista
Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes**

Thursday – 6:30 p.m.
Public Works Operations

May 15, 2007
1800 Maxwell Road CV

Meeting called to order by Chair Rios at 6:35 p.m.

Staff Present: Buck Martin, Director of Recreation
Dave Byers, Director of Public Works Operations
Jack Griffin, Director of General Services
Shauna Stokes, Assistant Director of Recreation
Rick Hopkins, Assistant Director of Public Works Operations
Larry Eliason, Parks and Open Space Manager
Ed Hall, Principal Recreation Manager
John Gates, Senior Recreation Supervisor
Ted Nelson, Recreation Supervisor III
Manuel Gonzalez, Aquatics Supervisor III

1. Roll Call/Motion to Excuse

Members Present: Commissioner Salcido, Commissioner Perondi, Commissioner Rios,
Commissioner Cien-Mayer

Members Absent: Commissioner Scott, Commissioner Ramos, Commissioner Searles

MSC Perondi/Salcido to excuse absent commissioners from tonight's meeting

2. Approval of Minutes –

- a. **January 18, 2007** – Move to June meeting.
- b. **February 15, 2007** – Move to June meeting
- c. **Proposed Fee Increases for Recreation Department** - Ms. Stokes (Assistant Director of Recreation) informed the Commission that the last fee increase for the Recreation Department was in 2003. The fee increase is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is allowed for in the Master Fee Schedule, and setting up fees for the Department's at three new facilities (Veterans, Monteville, and Salt Creek), which are not in the Master Fee Schedule. Other fee increases, higher than the CPI increase, being proposed are for athletics and aquatics. In addition, Ms. Stokes also noted that costs have increased across the board in all areas of Recreation, and feels that the fee increases are reasonable and necessary.

Ms. Stokes reviewed the fee increases in detail and said that the increase is equated to 11%. Review of the fee increases at Recreation Centers, Athletics and Miscellaneous Fees, Aquatics Fees, were reviewed. In particular, she noted some of the new fees that would be implemented, and they include: New – Alcohol Use Fee of \$100 for center rentals, Youth Sports League Fee from \$10 to \$11; eliminating the Annual Pass for aquatics, and keeping the quarterly pass. Also, changes in rental fees would be implemented. In total, \$75,000 annually would be gained overall with fee increase.

It was the consensus of all of the commissioners present that the fee increases are necessary.

Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) noted that the fee increases would be revisited within one year, and could possibly be increased yearly, or every other year.

MSC Salcido/Cien-Mayer (Vote 4-0-0-3 with Ramos, Searles, and Scott absent) to accept the staff report and recommend adoption of the proposed fee increase for the Recreation Department

3. Information Items

- a. **Cost Project for additional watering at Discovery Park** – Mr. Eliason (Parks and Open Space Manager) reported that an analysis of additional watering and cost for Discovery Park is \$100 - \$110 per night. Mr. Eliason noted that 1.2 million gallons of water are used for the month of July, with a cost of \$33,337.

Commissioner Rios asked about the watering cycles.

Mr. Eliason responded that the watering cycles do change with the season, and per the moisture in the air.

Commissioner Rios stated that winter sports utilize the fields heavily, and tear up certain portion of the fields, and if the grass is truly dry in those spots, it is very easy to knock that top dry area of grass off. He also noted that that he feels that additional watering of the fields once per week should be implemented, and not rely on the moisture in the air method, which could help the condition of fields tremendously.

Commissioner Salcido distributed photos of Discovery Park that he took 3 months ago (prior to the February Parks and Recreation Commission meeting), and on May 13. He also noted that from the photographs taken, the condition of the fields from 3 months ago to now are very drastic. Of special note, he stated that some areas of the fields will not recover from the wear and tear, and will require resodding and reseeding. He also reminded everyone that Discovery Park was shut-down for almost one-year after resodding approximately one year ago, and asked about the cost related to the resodding and work towards the fields last year. He also asked how or what the city did to allow the fields to get into the current condition. The money that is spent on the fields on renovation is wasted money, because there is no upkeep. Commissioner Salcido also informed the Commission and staff that he recognizes that there are budgetary constraints present, however, staff needs to look for alternative funding for the upkeep of the fields, that would bring the fields up to appropriate playing conditions so that no one is hurt. He noted in comparison that Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) is allowing alcohol at Recreation centers to bring in extra revenue; what can be done at Discovery Park to bring extra revenue for watering purposes and upkeep of the fields? Another note he made is that AYSO 116 (soccer) and Bonita Valley Girls Softball are the two sports that create the most wear and tear on the fields.

Commissioner Salcido asked and made the suggestion that the teams that utilize the fields the most should be able to adopt the park or field. The adoption of the fields

would include general maintenance of the fields, upkeep of the grass, sod, reseed as needed, etc. Can the City carry out such a suggestions?

Commissioner Salcido also distributed photographs of pictures taken of Veterans Park 3 months ago and present. He noted that the park was in horrible condition 3 months ago, and that present photographs indicate that it's nothing but dirt due to lack of watering and lack of maintenance. The issues for this park include: the City has only had this park for 1-year, how could this happen to a brand new park, and how can this situation be avoided with other parks? Do we charge additional fees for the use of the field(s) beyond what is already being charged and current fees just approved? He reminded everyone that this is a very heavily used park. Problems with booster pumps, why was the park approved without the necessary pumps which, would not allow the watering of the whole park.

Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) responded that with the weather being what it was this past winter, hard 2-week freeze, lack of rain in the winter, and cutting back on the watering, the fields were going to take a hit. With regards to the booster pump, the pump has been installed to allow for watering the whole park.

Commissioner Salcido stated that these issues with the fields is not about finger-pointing, it's about what can be done as an organization, as a municipality, to alleviate these types of maintenance issues associated with the fields. The City cannot continue to use the same format as being used now with maintaining the fields.

Commissioner Salcido also noted that if the teams that utilize the fields the most don't want to adopt the fields/park then, that organization would only be allowed to use the field every-other-year, and the field would be shut down the other year that is not being used. These organizations have funds available, and they have the capability of charging extra.

Commissioner Salcido discussed the topic of tournament play on the fields. He stated that there are regular tournaments that utilize the fields, and they cause a lot of damage to the fields, because for 3-days, the fields are heavily used on a constant basis. One suggestion is to charge tournament teams, for example: The City should charge the organizations utilizing the fields for their tournaments, and the fees should include, the cost of maintenance on the fields to the standard of a pre-playing condition. The City needs to look for other alternative funding to keep the fields in proper playing condition.

Commissioner Salcido discussed the vandalism currently taking place (copper theft) in the parks in the City. Surveillance cameras should be installed, and violators should be prosecuted to the fullest extent that the law allows. What is the cost of a camera?

Commissioner Salcido noted that he asked parks maintenance department along with Recreation and meet to come-up with alternative funding for maintaining the fields. How can these issues be resolved?

Commissioner Salcido also stated that he became aware that the football organization, National Youth Sports Organization from La Mesa utilizes the fields without proper authorization from the City, and they are not part of the Youth Sports

Council. Signage should be posted in the parks to read: "No organized sports without proper permit". Park Rangers cannot cite them for improper use of the fields. Coordination with the Chula Vista Police Department should be taking place when unauthorized organized sports utilize the fields. When condition of park is being reviewed, the City should look at who is utilizing the park. The City needs to be proactive with the maintenance of the fields.

Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) noted that the parks currently have signs posted that state that organized activity without a proper permit is not allowed. In addition, he stated that his Department would work with the Chula Vista Police Department with regards to enforcement of unlawful usage of the fields, since the park rangers do not have the authority to cite individuals for improper use of the fields, as they are not armed, and he does not want to see them involved in any confrontations. As a reminder, park rangers only have the authority to hand out parking citations in a park.

Commissioner Perondi stated that policies for field usage need to be developed before someone is hurt and the City is sued. In addition, the opinion of the City Attorney is needed with regards to restricting Chula Vista fields to only Chula Vista residents, and Chula Vista sports usage. The population in Chula Vista is now 230 thousand, and hard decisions need to be made with regards to usage of fields. The field usage needs to be looked at and move forward in a structured way with organized usage vs. community usage. He further stated that the new parks were built for the community to use, and by no means is wanting to be insulting to the organized sports groups, however, with the heavy usage that is currently happening, it appears that the community won't be able to utilize the fields due to the heavy programming taking place. He would like to see this aspect of park programming changed.

Ted Nelson (Recreation Supervisor III) informed the Commission that most of the parks have discontinued organized play on Sundays, and new parks are available to the community.

Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) informed the Commission that Veterans Park is closing on June 1, 2007 for 5-6 months and the cost to hydro seed it is \$6,300. In addition, he noted that major damage is caused by soccer practice and play, and stated that he didn't realize that Recreation centers were programming fields independently for use.

Commissioner Salcido stated that Chula Vista High School fields are in very good condition due to the volunteer work of organized sports users. They are watered, seeded, etc.

Mr. Byers responded that the schools have the freedom to close the gates to their fields, thus not allowing open play. In addition, an information item to Council is being sent in the upcoming week informing them of the condition of Veterans Park. Mr. Byers again reiterated that the Department cut back on watering the fields, no rain this past winter, and having 2-weeks of hard freeze, caused a lot of the problems with the fields. None of these weather elements helped the fields citywide. In addition, he stated that it is very obvious that the fields at Veterans Park had incredible usage, in that all 3 fields were programmed with 6 planned soccer games going crossways, then later, adult games were planned going the other way. He also

informed the Commission of his conversation with Matt Little, of General Services, that after this field was established, it stayed closed for 1-year, to ensure the turf was strong and roots were deep. It was agreed by all that this wasn't going to work well with all the new parks, where the fields would be fenced off, so the City tried to monitor and carefully program the fields. It is his opinion that the City began programming the new parks too soon, and too much programming is taking place.

Commissioner Cien-Mayer asked how long Discovery Park was closed for, and how long ago was it closed, and what is going to be done differently at Veterans, than what was done at Discovery Park with regards to field maintenance.

Mr. Byers responded that the last time Discovery Park was closed for turf renovation was June 1, 2005 until January 12, 2006. As for the latter questions, Mr. Byers responded that the park is going to be closed longer to ensure the grass is established, and monitor the usage on the fields. Heavy usage will not be allowed, and also ensure that the Recreation Department center supervisors are not over-programming the fields separate from the youth league.

Commissioner Cien-Mayer stated that fees for the Youth Sports Council should be higher than the \$11; this fee is not enough for usage of the fields. These organized sports have funds and are able to pay higher fees to the Youth Sports Council, and additional fees for use of the field.

- b. **KP/CV Kids** – Mr. Ed Hall (Principal Recreation Manager) provided information on a partnership that the Recreation Department and Kaiser Permanente entered into. The program is called Kids in Dynamic Shape (KP/CV KIDS). This program is for families with children ages 5 to 12 years old, is designed to provide families with the knowledge and skill to lead a healthy lifestyle. The program runs for six weeks, one session per week, for 1-½ hours per session and typically includes a staff nutritionist, behaviorist and exercise physiologist. . This program is offered at various recreation centers in the City. Kaiser subsidized the cost of the initial six-week program. Participants learn how to choose, shop and prepare nutritious, healthy and well-balanced meals, games and physical activities for the whole family.
- c. **CV POWER/Chula Vista Physicians Working with Recreation** – Mr. Ed Hall (Principal Recreation Manager) provided information on the CV POWER/Chula Vista Physicians Working with Recreation. He informed the commission that Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC), Commissioner Searles, and Recreation staff were teaming up with area doctors to prescribe free exercise program to help parents and children fight obesity. He further stated that participants have an opportunity to enter existing Fun to be Fit programs and regular drop in activities at Community Centers in Chula Vista. He also informed the Commission that doctors would fill out prescriptions on special prescription pads to bring to the recreation facility to get children exercising and moving. Currently the initial program is limited in scope, however, the program is expected to be expanded in the future once the pilot program is complete.
- d. **Results of April 19, 2007 Council Budget Workshop – Recreation** – Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) informed the Commission, that it was required to cancel the April Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, as department directors

were required to be in attendance at the Council Budget Workshop. Mr. Martin discussed the results of the Council Budget Workshop that was held on April 19, 2007 as it pertained to Recreation. Mr. Martin informed the Commission that each City department was given a net cost of budget reductions. The reduction for the Recreation Department consists of: reducing hours of operation at selected recreation facilities and making various operation changes, Service and Supply Reduction, and Increase Recreation Fees.

The Commission accepted the report as information and thanked Mr. Martin for his presentation.

- e. **Results of April 19, 2007 Council Budget Workshop – Public Works Operations** – Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) discussed his department's service impacts with regards to the budget reductions. The reduction for Public Works Operations were presented in two categories, which are: Direct Service Impacts and Development Services. Direct Service Impacts include: Reducing Park Maintenance Levels to include eliminating four vacant gardener positions, and reduced water usage which affect the condition of the turf, litter pickup will take longer to complete, reduced restroom cleaning at some parks, etc.; Reduce Street Sweeping Services, where streets will not be cleaned as often; Reduce Tree-Trimming Services which the number of trees trimmed will be reduced by 15%; and Service & Supply Budget Reductions. Development Services impacts include: Reductions in Development Services positions, and Service and Supply Budget Reductions.

The Commission accepted the report as information and thanked Mr. Byers for his presentation.

- f. **Proposed FY 07-08 Capital Improvement Program – Park and Recreation Project Funding Summary** – Mr. Jack Griffin (Director of General Services) briefly discussed the Capital Improvement Program for the Parks and Recreation projects. The total proposed budget is \$978,518. He referenced the projects that were distributed in the Commission packet. Projects include: Outdoor Sports Courts Renovation, Parkway Pool resurface, Hilltop Park Renovation, Rohr Park Gazebo Renovation, etc.

4. Unfinished Business: None
5. New Business: None
6. Written Communications: None
7. Commission Comments:

Commissioner Perondi informed everyone that he would not be attending June's Commission meeting, which would be his last meeting. He also thanked staff for all of their hard towards creating new facilities and parks, and jokingly stated that although he enjoyed naming parks, he was saddened that a park was not named after him. He also noted that he enjoyed his tenure on the Commission, and wanted staff to know that there are not enough aquatic facilities. With regards to earlier discussion on field conditions, Commissioner Perondi stated that the City really needs to take a firm look and make firm decisions with regards to field maintenance, the conditions the fields are in, and usage of fields, "Lay Fallow" Field Plan, before someone gets hurt. He also reminded everyone that when he first began his tenure on the Commission, field usage

and field maintenance were an issue, and back then, he asked that the City review their policy on field usage. Perhaps, charging an out of season-fee or in-season fee would help. Perhaps looking at volunteers to maintain parks, and hopefully, this would not take away permanent positions in Parks Division, however this would deal with labor issues. In addition, to Mr. Byers' statement about the schools closing their gates to the fields, Commissioner Perondi suggested that a letter be sent to the Board of Trustees on behalf of the Department and/or Commission with regards to field allocation.

Commissioner Salcido noted that his last meeting would be next month, June 2007.

8. Staff Comments -

- a. Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) reviewed the monthly report to the Commission. He noted the promotion of Elizabeth Kolata to Aquatic Supervisor II, the Boards and Commission event on June 18th, and the Alcohol Council Agenda Report that was approved by Council on May 15, 2007.
- b. Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) informed the Commission that vandalism has occurred in many of the parks where vandals are stealing the copper wiring. To date, the cost has been \$25,000, and General Services has been working with Chula Vista Police Department. In addition, Shelter Fee increase is being considered, and on-line reservation software is being researched and considered to make park reservations a bit easier for customers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. to June 21, 2007
Margarita Cellano